

**STATEMENT OF FINDINGS
AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS
TO THE
GALVESTON SEAWALL AND GROINS SYSTEM
GALVESTON COUNTY, TEXAS**

1. Purpose. This document addresses the proposed repairs to the Galveston Seawall (Seawall) and Groins System (Groins). The purpose of the proposed project is to restore the Seawall and Groins to their pre-Hurricane Ike condition. The combined storm surge and wave action from Hurricane Ike, which made landfall in Galveston on September 13, 2008, was the primary cause of damage to the Galveston Seawall. Although the Seawall appears to remain structurally intact, the damage to toe scour protection and exposure of the sheet pile cutoff could have significant consequences for future Seawall stability. In addition, loss of integrity of the Groins appears to have reduced their sand trapping efficiency which will result in increased erosion of the Seawall. Flanking of the Seawall at the west end has exposed areas landward of the Seawall to erosion, and continued erosion is possible from future wave impacts. Lack of repair prior the next hurricane season, beginning in June 2009, increases the risk of failure and potential new damages during a significant storm event and threatens the protected community and property of Galveston. This Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations to document findings concerning the environmental impacts of the proposed repair of this project.

2. Proposed Action. Two alternatives were evaluated including No Action, and the proposed repairs to the Seawall and Groins, which is the Recommended Plan. The proposed Federal action would consist of the construction of a new wall section at the Seawall West End Ramp, repairs to the maintenance access ramps at 57th and 35th Streets, repairs to the loss of subgrade and sidewalk between 25th and 22nd Streets, repair of grade settling and toe protection in various locations, void repair under the Seawall sidewalk in various locations, sheet pile repair at the Seawall toe, Seawall crack repair in various locations, and groin repair at 10th, 29th, 37th and 61st Streets.

3. Coordination. A Notice of Availability was issued to interested parties including Federal and state agencies, which described the proposed action and announced the availability of the Draft EA. Comments on the Notice of Availability and Draft EA and the District's responses are

included in Appendix G of the Final EA.

4. Environmental Effects. Galveston District has taken every reasonable measure to evaluate the environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Based on information provided in the EA and coordination with Federal, state, and local agencies, temporary and permanent effects resulting from the proposed project have been identified and can be found in Section 4 of the Final EA. The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to fish and wildlife resources. No significant degradation of water quality would occur and no impacts to cultural resources would result from the proposed project. In consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, avoidance and conservation measures were identified to protect threatened and endangered species in the proposed project area, resulting in a finding of not likely to adversely affect piping plovers, brown pelicans, and sea turtles. The project has been found to be consistent with the Texas Coastal Management Plan, and compliant with Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has issued a waiver for Section 401 certification for the project. In addition, a Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation (short form) of project impacts to water quality indicates the project will not adversely affect water quality. It is the District's conclusion that the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment or to the surrounding human population.

5. Determinations. The analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed project is based on the accompanying Final EA. Factors considered in the review were impacts to vegetation, wildlife, aquatic resources including Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, Environmental Justice, Prime and Unique Farmlands, Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Wastes, air, noise, water quality, recreational resources, roadways and traffic as well as cumulative impacts. The proposed project was found to be compliant with the Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, EFH, and the Texas Coastal Management Plan (TCMP).

6. Findings. Based on my analysis of the Final EA and other information pertaining to the proposed project, I find that the proposed repairs to the Seawall and Groins System will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Galveston District reviewed the project for consistency with the goals and policies of the TCMP. Coastal Natural Resource Areas in the project area were identified and evaluated for potential impacts from the proposed project and no adverse impacts were identified. Based on this analysis, I find that the proposed plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the TCMP to the maximum extent practicable. After consideration of the information presented in the Final EA, I have determined that an environmental impact statement is

not required under the provisions of NEPA, Section 102, and other applicable regulations of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and that the proposed project may be constructed.

06 APR 2009



David C. Weston

Colonel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
District Engineer